

Amendments to the Claims

Each of the nine independent claims in this Application (i.e., Claims 1, 20, 49, 68, 86, 102, 113, 123 and 130), as well as many of the dependent claims, have been amended. In this Response or in a previous filing, Applicants have cancelled Claims 2, 4, 8, 11, 19, 21, 26, 28, 36-48, 50, 52, 58, 73, 76, 87, 91, 96, 112, 118, and 122.

This listing of the claims, as shown below pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.121, will replace all prior versions and listings of the claims in the Application.

Listing of the Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for creating an automated bidding process among energy Providers in which ~~at least one~~ a moderating computer collects bids from each Provider of a plurality of energy Providers, processes the bids and designates at least ~~[[one]]~~ two Providers of the plurality of energy Providers to provide energy, consisting of electric power or natural gas, to at least one reseller for use by at least one end-user customer of the at least one reseller, based on an economic choice in accordance with auction rules, wherein the method comprises:
 - a. transmitting at least a portion of historical energy usage data associated with the at least one end-user customer of the at least one reseller to at least a ~~first~~ portion of the plurality of energy Providers;

- b. receiving, from each Provider of the plurality of energy Providers, including at least one energy Provider to whom the at least a portion of historical energy usage data has been transmitted in Step a., bids to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer of the at least one reseller, processing the bids in accordance with the auction rules to produce processed bid data, and storing the bids and the processed bid data in a data base ~~of the moderating computer~~ as first bidding data;
- c. transmitting at least a portion of the first bidding data to at least ~~a second portion~~ one bidding Provider of the plurality of energy Providers; and
- d. designating at least ~~[[one]]~~ two Providers of the plurality of energy Providers to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer, with each of said designated Providers to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end-user customer for use during at least a portion of a specific future time interval;

wherein each part of Steps a.- d. is performed by ~~at least one computer~~ the moderating computer or by the moderating computer working in conjunction with at least one adjunct computer.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim ~~[[2]]~~ 1 in which at least a first designated Provider is to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas to be used by the at least one ~~end-user~~ end-user customer at at least one end-user facility during at least a portion of the specific future time interval.
4. (Cancelled)
5. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 1 in which the designated Providers, when their respective commitments are summed, are designated to supply 100% of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end-user customer for use during at least a first segment of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval.
6. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 1 in which the auction rules include bid formulation requirements specifying the required elements that must be reflected in the bid for the bid to be considered valid.
7. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 6 in which the bid formulation requirements specify that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer.

8. (Cancelled)
9. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 1 including, in ~~at least one~~ the moderating computer or an adjunct computer, transmitting at least a portion of the first bidding data to the at least one reseller.
10. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 1 comprising, in ~~at least one~~ the moderating computer, receiving decision rules from an administrator associated with the moderating computer or from the at least one reseller, and processing at least a portion of the first bidding data and the decision rules, and designating at least a first designated Provider for the provision of electric power or natural gas to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer.
11. (Cancelled)
12. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 1 in which at least a part of the at least a portion of the first bidding data is transmitted to the at least ~~a second portion~~ one bidding Provider of the plurality of energy Providers subsequent to designating at least a first designated Provider to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer.

13. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 1 in which the bids to provide electric power or natural gas include bids to provide at least one standard unit or at least one block of electric power or natural gas.
14. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 13 in which the designated Providers, when their respective commitments are summed, are designated to supply 100% of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end-user customer for use during at least a first segment of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval.
15. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 13 in which the auction rules include bid formulation requirements specifying that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer.
16. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 1 in which at least a first designated Provider is designated to supply a fixed quantity of electric power or natural gas for use by the at least one end-user customer during at least a first portion of the specific future time interval.
17. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 16 further including, in ~~at least one~~ the moderating computer or an adjunct computer, specifying at least a first default

supplier to supply at least a part of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end-user customer for use during the at least a first portion of the specific future time interval.

18. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 1 further including transmitting, ~~by the moderating computer, or at least one adjunct computer, or a first DISCO serving the at least one reseller or serving the at least one customer, or an independent meter reading service entity,~~ to at least one of the designated Providers, data indicating at least a portion of the quantity of electric power or natural gas used during at least a part of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval by the at least one end-user customer, said transmitting being performed by the moderating computer, by at least a first adjunct computer to the moderating computer, by a computer associated with a first DISCO serving the at least one reseller or serving the at least one end-user customer, or by a computer associated with an independent meter reading service entity.

19. (Cancelled)

20. (Currently Amended) A method for creating an automated bidding process among energy Providers in which a moderating computer collects bids from each Provider of a plurality of energy Providers, processes the bids and communicates with a first control computer, thereby enabling the first control computer to

designate at least one Provider of the plurality of energy Providers to provide energy, consisting of electric power or natural gas, to at least one reseller for use by at least one end-user customer of the at least one reseller, based on an economic choice in accordance with auction rules, wherein the method comprises:

- a. in at least one of the moderating computer and the moderating computer working in conjunction with the first control computer, transmitting at least a portion of historical energy usage data associated with the at least one end-user customer of the at least one reseller to at least a first portion of the plurality of energy Providers;
- b. in the moderating computer, receiving, from each Provider of the plurality of energy Providers, including at least one energy Provider to whom the at least a portion of historical energy usage data has been transmitted in Step a., bids to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer of the at least one reseller, processing the bids in accordance with the auction rules to produce processed bid data, and storing the bids and the processed bid data in a data base of the moderating computer as first control computer data;
- c. in the moderating computer, transmitting at least a portion of the first control computer data to the first control computer;

- d. in at least one of the moderating computer and the first control computer, transmitting at least a portion of the first control computer data to at least a ~~second portion~~ one bidding Provider of the plurality of energy Providers; and
- e. in the first control computer, designating at least one Provider of the plurality of energy Providers to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer, with each designated Provider to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end-user customer for use during at least a portion of a specific future time interval.

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim ~~[[24]]~~ 20 in which at least a first designated Provider is to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas to be used by the at least one ~~end-user~~ end-user customer at at least one end-user facility during at least a portion of the specific future time interval.

23. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 20 in which the first control computer designates at least two Providers of the plurality of energy Providers to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer, with each of said designated Providers to supply at least

a portion of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end-user customer for use during the at least a portion of the specific future time interval.

24. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 20 in which the designated Providers, when their respective commitments are summed, are designated to supply 100% of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end-user customer for use during at least a first segment of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval.
25. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 20 in which the auction rules include bid formulation requirements specifying that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer.
26. (Cancelled)
27. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 20 comprising, in the first control computer, receiving decision rules from an administrator associated with the first control computer, or from the moderating computer, or from the at least one reseller, and processing at least a portion of the first control computer data and the decision rules, and designating at least a first designated Provider for the

provision of electric power or natural gas to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer.

28. (Cancelled)

29. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim ~~[[20]]~~ 23 in which the bids to provide electric power or natural gas include bids to provide at least one standard unit or at least one block of electric power or natural gas.

30. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 29 in which the designated Providers, when their respective commitments are summed, are designated to supply 100% of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end-user customer for use during at least a first segment of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval.

31. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 29 in which the auction rules include bid formulation requirements specifying that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer.

32. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 20 further including transmitting, ~~by the moderating computer, or the first control computer, or at least one adjunct~~

~~computer, or a first DISCO serving the at least one reseller or serving the at least one customer, or an independent meter reading service entity,~~ to at least one of the designated Providers, data indicating at least a portion of the quantity of electric power or natural gas used during at least a part of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval by the at least one end-user customer, said transmitting being performed by the moderating computer, by at least a first adjunct computer to the moderating computer, by the first control computer, by an adjunct computer to the control computer, by a computer associated with a first DISCO serving the at least one reseller or serving the at least one end-user customer, or by a computer associated with an independent meter reading service entity.

33. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 20 in which the first control computer is operated by the moderating computer, by an adjunct computer to the moderating computer, [[or]] by the at least one reseller, or by a first DISCO serving the at least one reseller or serving the at least one end-user customer.
34. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 20 in which at least a portion of ~~Steps a-e~~ are the functions of the first control computer is performed by at least one adjunct computer.

35. (Original) A method of Claim 20 in which the first control computer is a computer adjunct to the moderating computer.

Claims 36 -48 (Cancelled).

49. (Currently Amended) A method for conducting an automated bidding process among a plurality of energy Providers, such process utilizing ~~at least one a~~ moderating computer and based on an economic choice in accordance with auction rules, comprising:
- a. transmitting at least a portion of historical energy usage data associated with at least one end-user customer of at least one reseller to at least a ~~first~~ portion of the plurality of energy Providers;
 - b. receiving, from each Provider of the plurality of energy Providers, including at least one energy Provider to whom the at least a portion of historical energy usage data has been transmitted in Step a., bids to provide energy, consisting of electric power or natural gas, to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer of the at least one reseller;
 - c. processing the bids in accordance with the auction rules;
 - d. distributing at least a portion of processed bid information to at least ~~a second portion one bidding Provider~~ of the plurality of energy Providers; and
 - e. designating, on the basis of the processed bid information, at least one Provider of the plurality of energy Providers to provide electric power or natural

gas to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer, with each designated Provider to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end-user customer for use during at least a portion of a specific future time interval;

wherein each of Steps ~~[[a.-e.]]~~ a., d. and e. is performed by ~~at least one computer~~ the moderating computer, by the moderating computer working in conjunction with at least one adjunct computer, by the moderating computer working in conjunction with a control computer, or by the moderating computer working in conjunction with both at least one adjunct computer and the control computer, and wherein each of Steps b. and c. is performed by the moderating computer or by the moderating computer working in conjunction with at least one adjunct computer.

50. (Cancelled)

51. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim ~~[[50]]~~ 49 in which at least a first designated Provider is to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas to be used by the at least one ~~end-user~~ end-user customer at at least one end-user facility during at least a portion of the specific future time interval.

52. (Cancelled)

53. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 49 in which at least two Providers of the plurality of energy Providers are designated, on the basis of the processed bid information, to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer, with each of said designated Providers to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end-user customer for use during the at least a portion of the specific future time interval.
54. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 49 in which the designated Providers, when their respective commitments are summed, are designated to supply 100% of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end-user customer for use during at least a first segment of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval.
55. (Original) A method of Claim 49 in which the auction rules include bid formulation requirements specifying the required elements that must be reflected in the bid for the bid to be considered valid.
56. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 55 in which the bid formulation requirements specify that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer.

57. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 49 including, in the moderating computer or an adjunct computer, distributing at least a portion of the auction rules to at least a portion of the plurality of energy Providers.
58. (Cancelled)
59. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 49 including, in the moderating computer or an adjunct computer, transmitting at least a portion of the processed bid information to the at least one reseller.
60. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 49 including, in the moderating computer, in an adjunct computer, or in the control computer, notifying a first DISCO serving the at least one reseller, or serving the at least one end-user customer, of the designation of at least a first designated Provider to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer.

61. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 49 including distributing at least a part of the at least a portion of the processed bid information to the at least a ~~second~~ portion one bidding Provider of the plurality of energy Providers subsequent to the designating of at least a first designated Provider to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer.
62. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim ~~[[49]]~~ 53 in which the bids to provide electric power or natural gas include bids to provide at least one standard unit or at least one block of electric power or natural gas.
63. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 62 in which the designated Providers, when their respective commitments are summed, are designated to supply 100% of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end-user customer for use during at least a first segment of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval.
64. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 62 in which the auction rules include bid formulation requirements specifying that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one reseller for use by the at least one end-user customer.

65. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 49 including designating at least a first designated Provider to supply a fixed quantity of electric power or natural gas for use by the at least one end-user customer during at least a first portion of the specific future time interval.
66. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 65 further including, in the moderating computer, in an adjunct computer, or in the control computer, specifying at least a first default supplier to supply at least a part of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end-user customer for use during the at least a first portion of the specific future time interval.
67. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 49 further including transmitting, to at least one of the designated Providers, data indicating at least a portion of the quantity of electric power or natural gas used during at least a part of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval by the at least one end-user customer, said transmitting being performed by the moderating computer, by at least a first adjunct computer to the moderating computer, by the control computer, by an adjunct computer to the control computer, by a computer associated with a first DISCO serving the at least one reseller or serving the at least one end-user customer, or by a computer associated with an independent meter reading service entity.

68. (Currently Amended) A method for creating an automated bidding process among energy Providers for the benefit of end users in which a moderating computer collects bids from each Provider of a plurality of energy Providers, processes the bids and communicates with a first control computer, thereby enabling the first control computer to designate at least a first Provider of the plurality of energy Providers to provide energy, consisting of electric power or natural gas, to at least one end user, based on an economic choice in accordance with auction rules, wherein the method comprises:
- a. in at least one of the moderating computer and the moderating computer working in conjunction with the first control computer, transmitting at least a portion of historical energy usage data associated with the at least one end user to at least a first portion of the plurality of energy Providers;
 - b. in the moderating computer, receiving, from each Provider of the plurality of energy Providers, including at least one energy Provider to whom the at least a portion of historical energy usage data has been transmitted in Step a., bids to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one end user, processing the bids in accordance with the auction rules to produce processed bid data, and storing the bids and the processed bid data in a data base of the moderating computer as first control computer data;
 - c. in the moderating computer, transmitting at least a portion of the first control computer data to the first control computer;

- d. in at least one of the moderating computer and the first control computer, transmitting at least a portion of the first control computer data to at least ~~[[a]]~~ second portion one bidding Provider of the plurality of energy Providers; and
 - e. in the first control computer, designating at least the first Provider of the plurality of energy Providers to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one end user, with each designated Provider to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas to be used by the at least one end user at at least one end-user facility during at least a portion of a specific future time interval.
69. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 68 in which the designated Providers, when their respective commitments are summed, are designated to supply 100% of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use during at least a first segment of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval.
70. (Original) A method of Claim 68 in which the auction rules include bid formulation requirements specifying the required elements that must be reflected in the bid for the moderating computer to consider the bid valid.
71. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 70 in which the bid formulation requirements specify that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or

natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one end user.

72. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 68 in which the moderating computer or an adjunct computer transmits at least a portion of the auction rules to at least ~~[[a]]~~ one portion of the plurality of energy Providers.

73. (Cancelled)

74. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 68 including, in the moderating computer, in an adjunct computer, or in the first control computer, transmitting at least a ~~portion~~ part of the first control computer data to the at least one end user.

75. (Original) A method of Claim 68 comprising, in the first control computer, receiving decision rules from an administrator associated with the first control computer, or from the moderating computer, or from the at least one end user, processing at least a portion of the first control computer data and the decision rules, and designating at least the first Provider for the provision of electric power or natural gas to the at least one end user.

76. (Cancelled)

77. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 68 in which the moderating computer or the first control computer transmits at least a part of the at least a portion of the first control computer data to the at least ~~a second portion~~ one bidding Provider of the plurality of energy Providers subsequent to the first control computer designating at least the first Provider to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one end user.
78. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 68 in which the bids to provide electric power or natural gas include bids to provide at least one standard unit or at least one block of electric power or natural gas to the at least one end user.
79. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 78 in which the designated Providers, when their respective commitments are summed, are designated to supply 100% of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use during at least a first segment of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval.
80. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 78 in which the auction rules specify that the bids indicate the quantity of standard units or blocks of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one end user.

81. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 68 in which at least a first designated Provider is designated by the first control computer to supply a fixed quantity of electric power or natural gas to the at least one end user for use during at least a first portion of the specific future time interval.
82. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 81 further including, in the moderating computer, in an adjunct computer, or in the control computer, specifying at least a first default supplier to supply at least a part of the electric power or natural gas needed for use by the at least one end user during the at least a first portion of the specific future time interval.
83. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 68 in which the first control computer is operated by the moderating computer, by an adjunct computer, ~~[[or]]~~ by the at least one end user, ~~[[or]]~~ by a reseller to the at least one end user, or by a first DISCO serving the at least one end user.
84. (Original) A method of Claim 68 in which the first control computer is a computer adjunct to the moderating computer.
85. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 68 in which at least a portion of the ~~processing and communications~~ functions of ~~Steps a. e. are~~ the first control computer is performed by at least one adjunct computer.

86. (Currently Amended) A method for conducting an automated bidding process among a plurality of energy Providers for the benefit of Buyers, such process utilizing ~~at least one~~ a moderating computer and based on an economic choice in accordance with auction rules, comprising:
- a. receiving, from at least one Buyer, at least one request for future energy supply, consisting of electric power or natural gas;
 - b. processing the at least one request and distributing at least a portion of at least one processed request to a plurality of energy Providers;
 - c. transmitting at least a portion of historical energy usage data associated with the at least one Buyer to at least a portion of the plurality of energy Providers;
 - d. receiving, from at least two Providers of the plurality of energy Providers, including at least one energy Provider to whom the at least a portion of historical energy usage data has been transmitted in Step c., bids to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one Buyer;
 - e. processing the bids in accordance with the auction rules;
 - f. distributing at least a portion of processed bid information to at least ~~a portion~~ one bidding Provider of the at least two Providers; and
 - g. designating, on the basis of the processed bid information, at least one Provider of the at least two Providers to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one Buyer, with each designated Provider to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one Buyer

during at least a portion of a specific future time interval for use at at least one end-user facility;

wherein each of Steps ~~[[a.-g.]]~~ a., c. f. and g. is performed by ~~at least one computer~~ the moderating computer, by the moderating computer working in conjunction with at least one adjunct computer, by the moderating computer working in conjunction with a control computer, or by the moderating computer working in conjunction with both at least one adjunct computer and the control computer, and wherein each of Steps b., d. and e. is performed by the moderating computer or by the moderating computer working in conjunction with at least one adjunct computer.

87. (Cancelled)

88. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 86 in which at least two Providers are designated, on the basis of the processed bid information, to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one Buyer, with each of said designated Providers to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one Buyer for use during the at least a portion of the specific future time interval.

89. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 86 in which the designated Providers, when their respective commitments are summed, are designated to supply 100%

of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one Buyer for use during at least a first segment of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval.

90. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 86 in which, as part of the auction rules, bid formulation requirements specify that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one Buyer.
91. (Cancelled)
92. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 86 including distributing at least a part of the at least a portion of the processed bid information to the at least ~~a portion~~ one bidding Provider of the at least two Providers subsequent to the designating of at least a first designated Provider to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one Buyer.
93. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 86 further including transmitting, to at least one of the designated Providers, data indicating at least a portion of the quantity of electric power or natural gas supplied to the at least one Buyer during at least a part of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval for use at the at least one end-user facility, said transmitting being performed by the

moderating computer, by at least a first adjunct computer to the moderating computer, by the control computer, by an adjunct computer to the control computer, by a computer associated with a first DISCO serving the at least one Buyer, or by a computer associated with an independent meter reading service entity.

94. (Previously Amended) A method of Claim 86 including distributing at least a portion of the at least one processed request to at least a portion of the plurality of energy Providers by posting the at least a portion of the at least one processed request on a website or computer bulletin board accessible to the at least a portion of the plurality of energy Providers.
95. (Original) A method of Claim 86 including receiving bids from the at least two Providers by means of a software defined template.
96. (Cancelled)

97. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 86 including designating at least a first designated Provider to supply a fixed quantity of electric power or natural gas to the at least one Buyer for use during at least a first portion of the specific future time interval.
98. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 97 further including, in the moderating computer, in an adjunct computer, or in the control computer, specifying at least a first default supplier to supply at least a part of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one Buyer for use during the at least a first portion of the specific future time interval.
99. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim ~~[[86]]~~ 88 in which the bids to provide electric power or natural gas include bids to provide at least one standard unit or at least one block of electric power or natural gas.
100. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 99 in which the designated Providers, when their respective commitments are summed, are designated to supply 100% of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one Buyer for use during at least a first segment of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval.

101. (Previously Added) A method of Claim 99 in which the auction rules include bid formulation requirements specifying that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one Buyer.
102. (Currently Amended) A method for creating an automated bidding process among energy Providers in which ~~at least one~~ a moderating computer collects bids from each Provider of a plurality of energy Providers, processes the bids and designates at least one Provider of the plurality of energy Providers to provide energy, consisting of electric power or natural gas, to at least one end user, based on an economic choice in accordance with auction rules, wherein the method comprises:
- a. transmitting at least a portion of historical energy usage information associated with the at least one end user to at least a first portion of the plurality of energy Providers;
 - b. receiving, from each Provider of the plurality of energy Providers, including at least one energy Provider to whom the at least a portion of historical energy usage information has been transmitted in Step a., bids to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one end user, processing the bids in accordance with the auction rules to produce processed bid data, and storing the bids and the processed bid data in a data base ~~of the moderating computer~~ as first bidding data;

- c. transmitting at least a portion of the first bidding data to at least ~~a second~~
portion one bidding Provider of the plurality of energy Providers;
- d. designating at least one Provider of the plurality of energy Providers to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use at at least one end-user facility during a specific future time interval; and

wherein each part of Steps a.- d. is performed by ~~at least one computer~~ the moderating computer or by the moderating computer working in conjunction with at least one adjunct computer.

103. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 102 in which ~~at least one computer~~ designates at least two Providers of the plurality of energy Providers are designated to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one end user, with each of said Providers to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use during the specific future time interval.

104. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 102 in which the designated Providers, when their respective commitments are summed, are designated to supply 100% of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use at the at least one end-user facility during at least a segment of the specific future time interval.

105. (Previously Added) A method of Claim 102 in which the auction rules include bid formulation requirements specifying that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one end user.
106. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim ~~[[102]]~~ 103 in which the bids to provide electric power or natural gas include bids to provide at least one block of electric power or natural gas.
107. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 106 in which the designated Providers, when their respective commitments are summed, are designated to supply 100% of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use at the at least one end-user facility during at least a segment of the specific future time interval.
108. (Previously Added) A method of Claim 106 in which the auction rules include bid formulation requirements specifying that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one end user.

109. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 102 in which at least a first designated Provider is designated ~~by at least one computer~~ to supply a fixed quantity of electric power or natural gas to the at least one end user for use during at least a first portion of the specific future time interval.
110. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 109 further including, in ~~at least one the moderating computer or an adjunct computer~~, specifying at least a first default supplier to supply at least a part of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use during the at least a first portion of the specific future time interval.
111. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 102 further including transmitting, ~~by a moderating computer, or at least one adjunct computer, or a first DISCO serving the at least one end user, or an independent meter reading service entity,~~ to at least one of the designated Providers, data indicating at least a portion of the quantity of electric power or natural gas used by the at least one end user during at least a ~~portion~~ part of the specific future time interval at the at least one end-user facility, said transmitting being performed by the moderating computer, by at least a first adjunct computer to the moderating computer, by a computer associated with a first DISCO serving the at least one end user, or by a computer associated with an independent meter reading service entity.

112. (Cancelled)

113. (Currently Amended) A method for conducting an automated bidding process among a plurality of energy Providers for the benefit of end users, such process utilizing ~~at least one~~ a moderating computer and based on an economic choice in accordance with auction rules, comprising:

- a. transmitting at least a portion of historical energy usage information associated with at least one end user to at least a ~~first~~ portion of a plurality of energy Providers;
- b. receiving, from each Provider of the plurality of energy Providers, including at least one energy Provider to whom the at least a portion of historical energy usage information has been transmitted in Step a., bids to provide energy, consisting of electric power or natural gas, to the at least one end user;
- c. processing the bids in accordance with the auction rules;
- d. transmitting at least a portion of processed bid information to at least a ~~second portion~~ one bidding Provider of the plurality of energy Providers; and
- e. designating, on the basis of the processed bid information, at least ~~[[one]]~~ two Providers of the plurality of energy Providers to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one end user, with each of said designated Providers to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use at at least one end-user facility during a specific future time interval;

wherein each of Steps ~~[[a-e.]]~~ a., d. and e. is performed by ~~at least one computer~~
the moderating computer, by the moderating computer working in conjunction
with at least one adjunct computer, by the moderating computer working in
conjunction with a control computer, or by the moderating computer working in
conjunction with both at least one adjunct computer and the control computer,
and wherein each of Steps b. and c. is performed by the moderating computer or
by the moderating computer working in conjunction with at least one adjunct
computer.

114. (Previously Added) A method of Claim 113 in which the auction rules include bid formulation requirements specifying that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one end user.
115. (Previously Added) A method of Claim 113 in which the bids to provide electric power or natural gas include bids to provide at least one block of electric power or natural gas.
116. (Previously Added) A method of Claim 115 in which the auction rules include bid formulation requirements specifying that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one end user.

117. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 113 in which at least a part of the at least a portion of the processed bid information is transmitted to the at least a ~~second portion~~ one bidding Provider of the plurality of energy Providers subsequent to the designating of the at least one Provider to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one end user.
118. (Cancelled)
119. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 113 further including, in the moderating computer, in an adjunct computer, or in the control computer, specifying at least a first default supplier to supply at least a part of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use at the at least one end-user facility during at least a first portion of the specific future time interval.
120. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 113 in which at least a first Provider is designated to supply a fixed quantity of electric power or natural gas to provide the at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use at the at least one end-user facility during at least a first portion of the specific future time interval, and further including, in the moderating computer, in an adjunct computer, or in the control computer, specifying at least a first default supplier to supply at least a part of the electric power or natural gas

needed by the at least one end user for use at the at least one end-user facility during the at least a first portion of the specific future time interval.

121. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 113 further including transmitting, to at least one of the designated at least ~~[[one]]~~ two Providers, data indicating at least a portion of the quantity of electric power or natural gas used by the at least one end user during at least a part of the specific future time interval at the at least one end-user facility, said transmitting being performed by the moderating computer, by at least a first adjunct computer to the moderating computer, by the control computer, by an adjunct computer to the control computer, by a computer associated with a first DISCO serving the at least one end user, or by a computer associated with an independent meter reading service entity.

122. (Cancelled)

123. (Currently Amended) A method for conducting an automated bidding process among a plurality of energy Providers for the benefit of end users, such process utilizing ~~at least one~~ a moderating computer and based on an economic choice in accordance with auction rules, comprising:

- a. transmitting at least a portion of historical energy usage information associated with at least one end user to at least a ~~first~~ portion of a plurality of energy Providers;

- b. receiving, from each Provider of the plurality of energy Providers, including at least one energy Provider to whom the at least a portion of historical energy usage information has been transmitted in Step a., bids to provide energy, consisting of electric power or natural gas, to the at least one end user;
- c. processing the bids in accordance with the auction rules;
- d. transmitting at least a portion of processed bid information to at least a ~~second portion~~ one bidding Provider of the plurality of energy Providers; and
- e. designating, on the basis of the processed bid information, at least ~~[[two]]~~ one Provider~~[[s]]~~ of the plurality of energy Providers, ~~each of said at least two Providers~~ to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use at at least one end-user facility during a specific future time interval, such that the ~~at least two~~ designated Providers, when their respective designations to supply are summed, are designated to supply 100% of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use at the at least one end-user facility during at least a portion of the specific future time interval;

wherein each of Steps ~~[[a.-e.]]~~ a., d. and e. is performed by ~~at least one computer~~ the moderating computer, by the moderating computer working in conjunction with at least one adjunct computer, by the moderating computer working in conjunction with a control computer, or by the moderating computer working in conjunction with both at least one adjunct computer and the control computer, and wherein each of Steps b. and c. is performed by the moderating computer or

by the moderating computer working in conjunction with at least one adjunct computer.

124. (Previously Added) A method of Claim 123 in which the auction rules include bid formulation requirements specifying that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one end user.
125. (Previously Added) A method of Claim 123 in which the bids to provide electric power or natural gas include bids to provide at least one block of electric power or natural gas.
126. (Previously Added) A method of Claim 125 in which the auction rules include bid formulation requirements specifying that the bids indicate the quantity of electric power or natural gas each Provider will provide, at a specific price, to the at least one end user.
127. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 123 further including, in the moderating computer, in an adjunct computer, or in the control computer, specifying at least a first default supplier to supply at least a part of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use at the at least one end-user facility during at least a first portion of the specific future time interval.

128. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 123 in which at least a first Provider is designated to supply a fixed quantity of electric power or natural gas to provide the at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use at the at least one end-user facility during at least a first portion of the specific future time interval, and further including, in the moderating computer, in an adjunct computer, or in the control computer, specifying at least a first default supplier to supply at least a part of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one end user for use at the at least one end-user facility during the at least a first portion of the specific future time interval.
129. (Currently Amended) A method of Claim 123 further including transmitting, to at least one of the designated at least two Providers, data indicating at least a portion of the quantity of electric power or natural gas used by the at least one end user during at least a part of the at least a portion of the specific future time interval at the at least one end-user facility, said transmitting being performed by the moderating computer, by at least a first adjunct computer to the moderating computer, by the control computer, by an adjunct computer to the control computer, by a computer associated with a first DISCO serving the at least one end user, or by a computer associated with an independent meter reading service entity.

130. (Currently Amended) A method for conducting an automated bidding process among a plurality of energy Providers for the benefit of Buyers, such process utilizing ~~at least one~~ a moderating computer and based on an economic choice in accordance with auction rules, comprising:
- a. receiving, from at least one Buyer, at least one request for future energy supply, consisting of electric power or natural gas;
 - b. processing the at least one request and distributing at least a portion of at least one processed request to a plurality of energy Providers;
 - c. transmitting at least a portion of historical energy usage information associated with the at least one Buyer to at least a portion of the plurality of energy Providers;
 - d. receiving, from at least ~~three~~ two Providers of the plurality of energy Providers, including at least one energy Provider to whom the at least a portion of historical energy usage information has been transmitted in Step c., bids to provide electric power or natural gas to the at least one Buyer;
 - e. processing the bids in accordance with the auction rules;
 - f. transmitting at least a portion of processed bid information to at least ~~a portion~~ one bidding Provider of the at least three Providers; and
 - g. designating, on the basis of the processed bid information, ~~at least two~~ one Provider[[s]] of the at least ~~three~~ two Providers, ~~each of said at least two Providers to supply at least a portion of the electric power or natural gas needed by the at least one Buyer during a specific future time interval for use~~

~~at at least one end-user facility, such that the at least two Providers, when~~
~~their respective designations to supply are summed, are~~ with the one
designated Provider designated to supply 100% of the electric power or
natural gas needed by the at least one Buyer during the specific future time
interval for use at the at least one end-user facility;

wherein each of Steps ~~[[a.-g.]]~~ a., c., f. and g. is performed by ~~at least one~~
~~computer~~ the moderating computer, by the moderating computer working in
conjunction with at least one adjunct computer, by the moderating computer
working in conjunction with a control computer, or by the moderating computer
working in conjunction with both at least one adjunct computer and the control
computer, and wherein each of Steps b., d. and e. is performed by the
moderating computer or by the moderating computer working in conjunction with
at least one adjunct computer.